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March 25, 1998  
(Justice)

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*The following statement was issued today by Chris Decker, Minister of Justice. It was also read in the House of Assembly:*

### International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

March 21 marked the 38th anniversary of the day in 1960 when more than 70 peaceful demonstrators against apartheid were killed and over 180 were injured in South Africa.

In 1966, the United Nations General Assembly declared March 21 the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. The United Nations also declared that 1983 - 1993 as the Second Decade for Action to Combat Racial Discrimination. Canada proclaimed its involvement in March 1986 and all provinces collectively agreed in 1988 to commemorate March 21 as the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

This year, 1998 I have again proclaimed for the province of Newfoundland and Labrador that March 21 was the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

The government of Newfoundland and Labrador is committed to the belief that equal opportunity and treatment should exist for all people. Every resident of our province has the right to realize his or her full potential regardless of race, colour, national or ethnic origin. All of us should have the ability to live our lives in peace with respect and dignity.

The elimination of racial discrimination and racism can be accomplished if we allow ourselves to live with understanding and respect for those around us. This is the social and moral responsibility of us all.

I would like to take this opportunity, to commend the work of the Newfoundland and Labrador Human Rights Association in this area. They put forth tremendous effort in education and research towards the reduction of human suffering and intolerance that is unfortunately still around us even as we enter the year 2000. Let the next century bring with it a wave of new attitudes so that we can live in a society where all of us are seen as equals.

I invite all members of this House and of the province of Newfoundland and Labrador to recognize the significance of this initiative and through their daily activities promote the dignity and human rights of everyone in accordance with the principles ascribed to by the United Nations and this government.

1998 03 25

5:30 p.m.



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